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LETTER DATED 21 JULY 1997 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statements of the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the spokesman for the Panmunjom Mission of the Korean People's Army, issued on 18 July 1997, with regard to the recent armed conflict on the military demarcation line of the Korean peninsula.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) KIM Chang Guk
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Statement of the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, issued on 18 July 1997

The United States of America took issue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the recent armed conflict that took place on the military demarcation line in the central sector of the front on 16 July.

No sooner had the incident occurred than the White House and the Department of State and the Department of Defense of the United States slandered the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, alleging that the responsibility for the recent incident rested with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Senate hurriedly passed a "bill" demanding the "reservation" of the delivery of the funds concerning light water reactors.

Their behaviour is so strange that it cannot be understood nor pardoned at all.

As already reported, the recent incident is, in essence, a part of the current reckless provocation moves of the south Korean chief executive to look for a way out of a most serious ruling crisis in a shocking incident and to delay his doomed life.

The United States, as the master, must have known the plight of its stooge clearly.

This notwithstanding, it has joined the south Korean authorities in hurling mud at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea before the United States forces present in south Korea finished a "joint investigation". This cannot be considered to be merely a rash and irresponsible attitude.

Both the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are to have preliminary negotiations for the "four-way talks" on 5 August.

It goes without saying that the south Korean chief executive, who is doomed to ruin, may be indifferent to the "four-way talks" and inter-Korean dialogue.

Just at this time, the United States slandered the system of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the partner of dialogue, getting on its nerves, thus amplifying our doubt about and vigilance against the real intention of the United States as regards the "four-way talks".

We will keep our eyes upon the United States attitude from now on.

Annex

Statement of the Spokesman for the Panmunjom Mission of the Korean People's Army, issued on 18 July 1997

As reported, the south Korean puppet army committed a serious and provocative military act against us in the area near the military demarcation line in front of Chonam-ri, Phyonggang County, Kangwon Province, on 16 July.

On that day, our People's Army soldiers were on their routine patrol duty along a narrow path in the area of our side of the demilitarized zone.

At around 10.50 a.m., the south Korean puppet army, in an already prepared script, suddenly fired shells and bullets after making it appear as if our soldiers went over the central military demarcation line.

At the same time, the enemy fired several thousand shells and bullets at a post on our side by mobilizing 90 mm recoilless guns and 12.7 mm large-calibre machine guns.

As a result, many of our soldiers were severely injured and part of the building of the post of our side was destroyed.

Our People's Army soldiers could not repress their indignation over the prevailing situation and lost no time in taking self-defensive action and showered a fire of revenge on the enemy.

In a moment, several enemy pillboxes and recoilless gun positions were demolished.

Thanks to the utmost patience of our side, the armed conflict between both sides came to an end with difficulty at about 11.50 a.m.

No sooner had the incident occurred than the south Korean puppets began a smear campaign, claiming that we provoked the incident.

What cannot be overlooked is that the United States is patronizing and defending the south Korean authorities.

The United States is mistaken if it thinks it can conceal the provocateur by such a shabby plot in this age of civilization, shift the blame on to somebody and fish in troubled waters.

Our People's Army soldiers are anxious to retaliate against the enemies with seething indignation.

It is the disposition of our army to administer stick for stick.

The United States and the south Korean puppets should not be any longer in drawing their serious lesson from the current incident.

If the enemies commit a provocative act against us again, we will deal a greater annihilating retaliatory blow at the aggressors any time, any place and whoever they may be, so that they will die a disgraceful death.

The United States side is also to blame for this armed conflict.

Such a dramatic development as the current incident could be avoidable if the United States would not leave the maintenance of the demilitarized zone entirely to the south Korean puppets, insisting only on new war provocation, while neglecting our proposal for establishing an interim agreement that can replace the obsolete Korean Armistice Agreement, and for Democratic People's Republic of Korea/United States military general-level talks.

As long as the present old Armistice system remains unchanged, peace and security can by no means be guaranteed on the Korean peninsula.

The United States and the south Korean authorities must clarify their position toward peace and war.